

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 240342

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/AFN:STESCUDERO

APPROVED BY P

EUR:RBARBOUR

S/S- LCJOHNSTONE

NEA - ALATHERTON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 240342

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, MO, US

SUBJECT: SISCO-BOUTALEB MEETING, OCTOBER 7

EYES ONLY FOR THE AMBASSADOR

REFERENCE: STATE 237194 (NOTAL)

1. UNDER SECRETARY SISCO AND MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR TO US BOUTALEB MET OCTOBER 7 AT BOUTALEB'S REQUEST TO DISCUSS SPANISH SAHARA SITUATION IN LIGHT OF SECRETARY'S MESSAGE TO KING HASSAN (REFTEL). BOUTALEB NOTED KING HASSAN HAD REQUESTED HE RETURN TO MOROCCO TO ASSIST IN FORMULATING RESPONSE AND BOUTALEB NEEDED CLARIFICATION BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE. SISCO NOTED REPORTS SUGGESTING POSSIBLE MILITARY ACTION BY MOROCCO IN SAHARA AND STATED WE WISHED TO SHARE REPORTS WITH HASSAN IN VIEW OUR INTIMATE RELATIONS.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 240342

HE RESTATED US POSITION OF NEUTRALITY AND NON-INVOLVEMENT

AND INFORMED BOUTALEB THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER, DURING HIS MEETING WITH SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER CORTINA, UNDERScoreD US VIEW OF IMPORTANCE OF SAHARA SITUATION AND NEED THAT IT BE RESOLVED BY NEGOTIATION.

2. BOUTALEB RESPONDED WITH CAVEAT THAT OFFICIAL COMMENT ON MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY TO KING HASSAN COULD ONLY BE MADE BY HASSAN BUT HE OFFERED FOLLOWING PERSONAL REMARKS. AFTER STANDARD PRESENTATION OF MOROCCAN POSITION ON SAHARA BOUTALEB SAID HE REGARDS US REACTION IN THIS INSTANCE AS POSITIVE STEP WHICH IN NO WAY CONSTITUTES INTERFERENCE BUT SHOWS US RECOGNITION IT CAN NO LONGER STAND ASIDE. MOROCCO HAD CHOSEN FRIENDSHIP WITH U.S., WITH ITS ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES, AND LOOKED TO U.S. TO HELP. BOUTALEB OPINED THAT MOROCCO WOULD APPRECIATE ANY U.S. ADVICE EXCEPT REPEAT EXCEPT ADVICE TO WAIT, SINCE MOROCCANS PERCEIVE SPANISH-ALGERIAN COLLUSION, REPRESSION OF MOROCCAN BACKED FLU IN SAHARA, AND CONTINUING LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARD ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION AS EVIDENCE THAT CONTINUED HESITATION WILL CAUSE MOROCCO TO LOSE ITS OPPORTUNITY TO REGAIN SAHARAN REGION. GOM, BOUTALEB SAID, IS GROWING DESPERATE IN FACE OF INSINCERE POSITION BY SPANISH AND INCREASINGLY EXCITED STATE OF MOROCCAN PEOPLE. BOUTALEB COMMENTED THAT DECISION HAS NOT YET BEEN TAKEN BUT KING HASSAN DID VOW ON AUGUST 20 TO REGAIN SAHARAN TERRITORY BY YEAR'S END THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS IF POSSIBLE BUT BY WAR IF NECESSARY.

3. MR. SISCO AGAIN EMPHASIZED U.S. PERCEPTION THAT ALL PARTIES HAVE INTEREST IN PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF SAHARAN DISPUTE AND UNDERScoreD OUR DESIRE FOR NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. HE EXPRESSED U.S. READINESS TO DISCUSS THE MATTER FURTHER AFTER RECEIPT OF KING HASSAN'S REPLY.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SPEAKING ON PERSONAL BASIS BOUTALEB GAVE CLEAR IMPRESSION OF GROWING MOROCCAN FRUSTRATION WITH FAILURE TO OBTAIN ACCEPTABLE RESULTS THROUGH DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES. IT MAY BE SIGNIFICANT THAT BOUTALEB, A CAREFUL AND EXPERIENCED DIPLOMAT, MADE NO MENTION OF ICJ OR UN PRONOUNCEMENTS EVEN IN REFERENCE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 240342

TO KING HASSAN'S AUGUST 20 SPEECH WHICH PROMISED TO AWAIT RESULTS IN INTERNATIONAL FORA BEFORE TAKING UNILATERAL ACTION IN SAHARA. KISSINGER

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